R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT--IMPLICATIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION.

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THE COMPOUNDING PROBLEMS OF A SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LESS THAN 15,000 POPULATION ARE OUTLINED BY THE DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN AN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT IN ILLINOIS. A VARIETY OF ADAPTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES IS CONSIDERED. THE DEVELOPMENT SINCE 1959-60 OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT WHICH NOW SERVES 46 SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AND INCLUDES 123 PERSONNEL IS DESCRIBED WITH AN ACCOMPANYING TABLE PERSCRIBING THE NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL WORKERS NEEDED IN EACH AREA OF HANDICAP FOR A BASE POPULATION OF 15,000. (DF)

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SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT OF LAKE COUNTY
4374 West Old Grand Avenue
Gurnee, Illinois 60031

April 29, 1967

TO: Minnesota C.E.C. Convention

FROM: L. D. Vuillemot, Director

SUBJECT: Intermediate School District - Implications for Special Education.

I. INTRODUCTION.

The very nature of special education programs and services presents problems to any school system. The normal range of problems are doubled in a small school district setting of less than 15,000 base population. In addition to the normal problems, all persons involved face the following compounding problems:

A. Low Prevalence Rates of Exceptional Children Result in:

1. Inadequate numbers to justify a program.
2. Seeking placement in a neighboring district.
3. Programs established having wide age and ability levels.
4. Transportation problems.

B. Lack of Adequate Special Education Personnel.

1. Director.
2. Supervisors.
3. Pscyhologists.
4. Social Workers.
5. Consultants (Medical, etc.).

C. Fragmented Programs.

1. Isolated staff.
2. Inability to attract and retain staff.
3. Lack of adequate supportive services and/or inadequate supportive services.

D. Unmet Needs of Exceptional Children.

E. Unsolved and Seemingly Unsolvable Problems.

To provide adequate solutions to the unsolved problems and development of a comprehensive program of special education lies at the doorstep of the special education community. The leadership of this community, in cooperation with all elements of the total community, must create the climate, the structure, and the financial support for a solution.

It is apparent that their exists common elements within the problems. These are:

1. Need for a larger population base - of at least 15,000. (See Appendix I)

2. Cooperation between school districts and pooling of resources.

3. Centralized special education administration and services.

It is within the common elements that a solution is being found across the United States to solve these critical problems.

II. SOLUTION.

The solution is an administrative structure allowing for cooperation betwee school districts having a student population base of at least 15,000. The administrative structure thus developed is known by different names:

A. Special Education District.

B. Joint Agreement District.

C. County Plan.

D. Cooperative District.

E. Intermediate School District.

III. DEFINITION.

A. Special Education Districts, Cooperative Districts, and Intermediate Districts may be a combination of local school districts within a county or the combination may cover more than one county. The combination of districts should have a student population base of at least 15,000, containing at least one high school and its feeder elementary districts.

B. County Program. All School districts within one county combined into one county special education program.

C. Joint Agreements may be two or more special education districts who jointly provide for one type of handicapped child where prevalence rates are too low to permit comprehensive services within any one special education district.

IV. ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES.

A. Special Education Districts, Cooperative Districts, and Intermediate Districts.

1. A written contract is drawn up.

a. Approved by each member district.

b. Lists the name and number of each district.

c. Provision made for allowing addition or withdrawal of member districts.

d. Provision for amendment.

e. Financial plan is included.

1) Cost of joining.

2) Costs of centralized services.

3) Method of computing program costs and billing.

f. Responsibilities of:

1) Member districts.

2) Special Education District.

2. Administrative plan developed to provide:

a. General Board - Meets once or twice a year.

1) Representative from every member district.

2) Establish general policies.

3) Approve Budget.

4) Review program effectiveness.

5) Elect Executive Board.

b. Executive Board - Meets monthly.

1) Constitued as a School Board.

2) Hires the Director.

3) Conducts business of District.

c. Director.

Actual administration delegated to director and all staff responsible to Director.

d. Administrative District.

One school district designated as administrative district. This district's Board of Education receives and disburses funds for Executive Board - unless school law makes it legal for the Special Education District to do so.

B. County Districts.

1. Established by school law.

2. Voters within a county asked to vote on the question - Do you want a Special Education County Program with separate taxing powers?

3. Elected Board - County Superintendent of Schools permanent Secretary of Board.

a. Hires director.

b. Pays for all programs out of their own taxes.

C. Joint Agreements (J.A.)

1. Written contract agreement.

a. Cost of joining.

b. Method of sharing program costs.

c. Administrative District.

d. Responsibilities.

e. Method of additional members, withdrawing, and reimbursement upon dissolution of J. A.

2. Centralized location.

3. Transportation Program.

V. EXAMPLE OF ONE SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT.

A. Name:

Special Education District of Lake County (SEDOL). Established 1960.

B. Type:

Special Education District - Not a County Program.

C. Member Districts Served - 46 School Districts.

1. 35 Elementary Districts.

2. 11 High School Districts.

3. 50,500 student population.

a. Elementary Districts.

1) Largest 3,320.

2) Smallest 94. (Closed last one room school in 1965.)

b. High School Districts.

1) Largest 1,911.

2) Smallest 467.

4. SEDOL covers 477.44 square miles.

a. Smallest district - 1.80 square miles.

b. Largest districts - 56.0 square miles.

D. Type of Area Served.

The forty six districts covers a diversified area including:

1. Heavy industrial area.

2. Typical suburban "bedroom communities" for Chicago.

3. Upper class residential areas.

4. Poverty pockets - eligible for Title I funds.

5. Rural areas.

6. Resort areas.

7. Large navy and army base.

E. Special Education in Lake County.

The following special education programs are established in Lake County:

1. Waukegan area.

a. Elementary District population of 10,000 has its own TMH, EMH, Psychological Services, Social Work Services, and Director. Sends deaf, hard of hearing, and physically handicapped to SEDOL.

b. High School District, population 4,000, has its own EMH program.

2. Northern Suburban District.

Serves 10 elementary and 2 high school districts in the Southeast area of Lake County. This district crosses into Cook County to serve 12 districts in Northern Cook County.

3. SEDOL - 46 remaining districts. Conducts J.A. program for 2 counties in deaf and in physically handicapped with Waukegan.

F. Program Development.

SEDOL organized 59-60 - Director hired May, 1960

		1959-60	1960-61	1966-67
1.	Member Districts	0	24	46
2.	Student Population	0	20,760	50,500
3.	Programs and Services.			
	Blind	0	0	J.A. program.
	Partially Seeing	0	0	2
	Deaf	0	1	8
	Hard of hearing	0	0	2
	Educable	0	1	27
	Trainable	2 (parent operated)	2	8
	Physically Handicapped	0	0	2
	Multiply Handicapped	0	0	1
	Emotionally Disturbed	0	0	3
	Socially Maladjusted	0	0	4
	Learning Disorders	0	0	5
	Speech Therapists	2	4	22
	Teacher Aids	0	0	10
	Social Workers	0	0	5
	Psychological	0	½ time person	9
	Secretarial	0	1	10
	Prevocational	0	0	2
	Supervisors	0	0	2
	Director	0	1	1
		4	10½	123
4.	Staff hired by Member Districts.			
	Social Worker	0	0	2
	Psychologists	0	0	3
5.	Transportation Services.			
	Buses	0	4	25
	Cabs	0	0	0
	Parents	Yes	No	No

G. Financial Organization of SEDOL.

1. Administrative Costs to Member Districts.

$1.00 per pupil based on A.D.E. as of 6th day of school.

2. How costs for Special Education student placed determined.

a. SEDOL hires all staff and provides supplies.

b. Total cost determined.

c. State reimbursement received by SEDOL deducted from total cost to determine net cost.

d. Total net cost ÷ by months in school year to determine monthly cost.

e. Monthly cost ÷ by total number of students enrolled.

f. Member district billed for each student placed, an average cost per month.

3. How are monies raised by SEDOL to carry staff and supplies?

a. Pre-billing system.

1) Projected programs pre-billed ½ on July 1.

2) Pre-billed ½ on January 1.

3) Adjusted billing and/or payment May 1.

b. State reimbursement due October following completed school year.

4. Payments of Member Districts.

a. $1.00 per A.D.E.

b. Costs of any students placed.

c. Direct bills from transportation company.

d. No charge for Social Work or Psychological Services.

VI. ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL DISTRICT.

Analysis of these districts that have failed shows the major factors in all cases were:

A. Cooperation.

Member districts retain all controls and will not assign the cooperative district those responsibilities that it needs to conduct a cooperative program. The member district cannot do it alone so they join a cooperative district and then fail to assign any rights to the cooperative district.

B. Leadership.

Failure to obtain a competent Special Education Director. The key to item A above is leadership at the Cooperative District level. Inept leadership increases lack of cooperation and "snowball" of failure grows rapidly.

The chronic problems of (1) financial problems, (2) housing shortage, and (3) slow program development due to staff shortage have not contributed to a Cooperative District Failure.

LDV/bn

APPENDIX*

Number of Professional Workers Needed for a Base Population of 15,000 (K-12)

	Rate	No. of Pupils	No. of Professional Personnel
Educable Mentally Handicapped	.02	300	20-22
Socially Maladjusted	.02	300	15-20
Emotionally Disturbed	.01	150	15-20
Learning Disorders	.01	150	15
Speech	.05	750	7-10
Supervisors			3-6
Social Worker	1 per 4,000 school population		4
Psychologist	1 per 5,000 school population		3
Trainable Mentally Handicapped	.002	30	2-3
Physically Handicapped Class	.001	15	2
Deaf	.001	15	1-3
Multiply Handicapped	.0005	7	1-2
Physically Handicapped Home and Hospital	.0025	37	**
Blind	.0003	4	1
Partially Seeing	.0006	9	1
Director			1

**Depending on full-time or part-time personnel.

*Guidelines for County Advisory Committees
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Springfield, 1965